United Nations S/2001/1076

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 November 2001

Original: English

Interim report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the situation in Burundi

I. Introduction

1. The indefatigable efforts of the Facilitator of the Burundi peace process, former president Nelson Mandela, and the leaders of the region have finally succeeded in bringing about the installation of a broad-based transitional government of national unity, on 1 November, and have ushered in a new and promising chapter in the search for lasting peace and stability in Burundi. The occasion was witnessed by the Presidents of Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, the Deputy Presidents of South Africa and Uganda, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and representatives of the United Nations and the European Union.

2. Mr. Mandela announced that although his role as Facilitator had come to an end, he would continue to act as moral guarantor to the Arusha Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi and would be represented on the Implementation Monitoring Committee. Mr. Mandela stressed that responsibility for ensuring the full and speedy implementation of the remaining provisions of the Arusha Agreement rested on the Committee, under the chairmanship of the United Nations, and the international community. The Committee has agreed to hold its sixth ordinary session in Bujumbura, the first ever in Burundi, before the end of the year. This is a welcome decision, which will have positive implications for the efforts to implement the Arusha Agreement.

3. In my letter dated 10 November 2000 (S/2000/1096), I informed the Security Council that the Arusha Agreement of 28 August 2000 had entrusted to the United Nations the important and special role of chairing the Implementation Monitoring Committee. The responsibilities entrusted to the Committee included following up, monitoring, supervising and coordinating the implementation of the Agreement. I had hoped to submit to the Security Council shortly thereafter a proposal for an expanded mandate for the United Nations in Burundi and to indicate how the United Nations presence in the country could be strengthened to help it carry out the functions entrusted to it.

4. However, although the Agreement contained a comprehensive package of measures aimed at bringing about peace and reconciliation in Burundi, efforts to implement it were stymied by a lack of agreement in two critical areas: transitional leadership and a cessation of hostilities/ceasefire, the latter since the two armed groups, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Front for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) and the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People-National Liberation Forces (PALIPEHUTU-FNL), were not part of the Arusha peace process. In particular, the intensification of fighting since the signing of the Agreement made it impossible to carry out many of the tasks of the transitional phase, including the return and resettlement of refugees and displaced people as well as the reform of the military and security institutions. It has also exacerbated the humanitarian situation in a country already afflicted with a malaria epidemic and widespread malnutrition and hunger.

5. In its presidential statement of 2 March (S/PRST/2001/6), the Security Council emphasized the important role of the Implementation Monitoring Committee in advancing the peace process and, in its statement of 29 June (S/PRST/2001/17), the Council

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encouraged me to continue to engage the armed groups and to contribute to coordinated efforts to bring about a political settlement of the conflict. Stressing its intention to continue to follow closely developments in Burundi, including through regular briefings by the Secretariat, the Council expressed its readiness to consider, in the light of progress made on the outstanding issues, further contributions to the peace process and the implementation of the Agreement.

6. The purpose of the present report is to update the Security Council on major developments in and relating to Burundi and to address some of the issues related to the mandate for, and resources needed by, the United Nations to continue to support the implementation of the Agreement. The report will sketch the outlines of the scope and magnitude of the tasks that are expected to derive from the United Nations chairmanship of the Implementation Monitoring Committee now that a transitional government has been established. However, agreement on a ceasefire is expected to take longer. As a result, the resource requirements that could be estimated with any degree of certainty would be those associated with the Committee. In the first instance, with the establishment of the transitional government on 1 November and the expected repatriation of the Committee to Burundi, the various United Nations entities supporting the peace process would need to be consolidated, refocused and strengthened.

II. Implementation Monitoring Committee

7. As the Security Council is aware, at the request of the Burundian signatories to the Arusha Agreement and in consultation with the Facilitator, I appointed my Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, Berhanu Dinka, to serve as chairman of the Implementation Monitoring Committee. The mandate of the Committee, as specified in protocol V of the Arusha Agreement, is:

(a) To follow up, monitor, supervise, coordinate and ensure the effective implementation of all provisions of the Agreement;

(b) To ensure that the implementation timetable is respected;

(c) To ensure the accurate interpretation of the Agreement;

(d) To reconcile points of view;

(e) To arbitrate and rule on any dispute that may arise among signatories;

(f) To give guidance to and coordinate the activities of all commissions and subcommissions set up pursuant to each protocol for the purpose of implementing the Agreement, namely, the Technical Committee to implement the procedures for the establishment of a national defense force, the Technical Committee to implement procedures for the establishment of the national police, the Ceasefire Commission, the Reintegration Commission and the National Commission for the Rehabilitation of *Sinistrés*;

(g) To assist and support the transitional government in the mobilization of financial, material, technical and human resources required for the implementation of the Agreement;

(h) To decide on the admission of new participating parties in accordance with article 14 of protocol II of the Agreement;

(i) To perform any other duty specifically allocated to it by the Agreement.

8. The Implementation Monitoring Committee also serves as the mechanism for guaranteeing compliance with the Arusha Agreement. Accordingly, the Committee and its Chairman will closely monitor the implementation of the conditions accepted by President Pierre Buyoya (see para. 16, below). Furthermore, the Chairman of the Committee and two representatives of the Facilitator (Judge Mark Bomani and Professor Nicholas Haysom) were asked to assist President Buyoya and the parties to reach an amicable and speedy agreement on the distribution of cabinet posts and the allocation of ministries, should differences arise among the signatories.

9. The Implementation Monitoring Committee is composed of 29 representatives: 19 from the Burundian signatories to the Agreement; 6 from Burundian civil society; and 1 each from the United Nations (Chairman), the donor community, the Organization of African Unity and the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi. A representative of the Facilitator participates as an observer.

10. The Committee will be based in Bujumbura. Meanwhile, it has held its meetings in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, until the necessary conditions, particularly those relating to security, are established in Burundi. The Committee held its first meeting in January 2001 and has held four other sessions, in March, May/June, August and October, all of them in Arusha.

11. During those sessions, the Implementation Monitoring Committee considered a number of important issues the resolution of which was not contingent upon prior agreements on the transitional leadership or the cessation of hostilities/ceasefire. The Committee is also working to prepare the ground for the full implementation of the Agreement once the outstanding issues are resolved. In addition, with its inclusive composition and the need for its members to work together on a wide range of issues and tasks, the Committee is helping to build confidence among the Burundian parties and to sustain the positive spirit of the Agreement.

12. In accordance with the Agreement, the Implementation Monitoring Committee has called for the urgent establishment by the Government of Burundi of an independent Commission of Inquiry to investigate the question of political prisoners and prison conditions in Burundi. The Commission would comprise 12 members, 8 of whom would be Burundian legal experts provided by the Government in consultation with the Committee. The remaining 4 would be international legal experts provided by the United Nations. The Commission is to start its work in November and has been given three months to complete its investigation and make recommendations.

13. The Implementation Monitoring Committee has also considered the drafting of legislation by the Government and the National Assembly on temporary immunity for politically motivated crimes, the repeal of provisions in the law hindering political freedom, the preparations necessary for the voluntary repatriation of refugees and the reintegration and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons. Furthermore, it has discussed the conditions necessary for the installation of a transitional government and the timing of that government's request for the deployment of an international peacekeeping force to support the implementation of the Agreement.

14. As part of the preparatory work undertaken so far, two working groups of the Implementation Monitoring Committee have been operating in Bujumbura, with the support of the United Nations Office in Burundi. Those two groups have been charged respectively with preparing an inventory of existing Burundian legislation that inhibits free political activity and with drafting a summary of the Arusha Agreement and a common message to be distributed to the people of Burundi as part of a public information campaign. The United Nations Office in Burundi is also supporting the peace process, including the work of the Committee, through its public information activities and its assistance in facilitating the participation of civil society.

III. Transitional arrangements

15. The Facilitator convened two important meetings in July 2001 in an effort to break the impasse in the transitional arrangements: the first with the leaders of the Regional Peace Initiative in Lusaka on 8 July and the second with the signatories of the Arusha Agreement in Johannesburg two days later. In the first meeting, the Facilitator informed the leaders that, given the lack of consensus within the G-10 (Tutsi) group of parties and the position taken by the army, he deemed it prudent to propose that the region accept Mr. Buyoya as the transitional leader for the first phase. The leaders agreed, but insisted that the conditions put forth by the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU) be presented also as those of the Initiative and that Mr. Buyoya confirm his acceptance of them at the Fifteenth Summit Meeting of the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi, to be held on 23 July, where a final decision would be taken.

16. The conditions that Mr. Buyoya agreed to and the implementation of which will be monitored by the Implementation Monitoring Committee were the following:

(a) Include representatives of the signatory parties in the transitional government;

(b) Faithfully and without reservation implement all the stipulations of the Agreement;

(c) Proceed as soon as possible to reform the army and to integrate the armed groups into the army;

(d) Collaborate fully with the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees with regard to the repatriation of refugees and the resettlement of internally displaced persons;

(e) Offer protection to all political leaders, particularly those returning from exile;

(f) Refrain from reprisals against political opponents;

(g) Release political prisoners on the recommendation of the independent commission of inquiry to be established;

(h) Appeal for the deployment of regional and international troops for the purpose of maintaining peace and security and collaborate with them;

(i) Authorize the establishment of a special protection unit for political leaders consisting of an equal number of soldiers/Burundian policemen and people appointed by the G-7 (Hutu) and G-10 (Tutsi) groups operating under their joint command and assisted and trained by the countries that have volunteered to provide troops;

(j) Work for an equitable representation of Burundian communities in all public offices;

(k) Collaborate with the Implementation Monitoring Committee;

(l) Cease the functions of the President of Burundi at the end of an 18-month period.

17. At the conclusion of his meeting with the signatory parties in Johannesburg on 10 July, the Facilitator announced that agreement had been reached on the transitional leadership. The agreement was for Mr. Buyoya to lead the first half of the three-year transitional period with Domitien Ndayizeye (FRODEBU) as Vice-President. During the second phase, Mr. Ndayizeye will take over the presidency and a new Vice-President will be designated by the G-10 group.

18. The Fifteenth Summit Meeting of the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi held on 23 July 2001, took note of Mr. Mandela's proposal on the question of the transitional leadership without discussing the matter further with the signatory parties. Apparently, 14 of the 19 Burundian signatories had agreed that Mr. Buyoya would lead the first phase of the transition, provided that he accepted the conditions presented to him in Lusaka. Mr. Buyoya signed a document agreeing to fulfil all the conditions. The document was co-signed by the Chairman of the Initiative, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and by Mr. Ndayizeye.

19. The Summit agreed that a protection force, later referred to as a special protection unit, should be deployed in Burundi as soon as possible. Half of the special protection unit would come from the existing army and police forces and the other half would be contributed by the G-7 (Hutu) group from among the civilian population, the signatory parties that had armed elements (CNDD, National Liberation Front, PALIPEHUTU) and any other sector of society that enjoyed the confidence of the G-7. The Summit felt that the special protection unit should be of sufficient size and capacity to protect returning exiled leaders including those from the Burundian army. It also agreed that the special protection unit should have a neutral command to start with, assisted by the four countries — Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa — that have shown an interest in contributing troops to be deployed in Burundi to ensure respect for the ceasefire prior to establishing a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

20. The Summit decided that reform of the army should begin immediately after the transitional government was installed and that the four countries mentioned above should contribute troops not only for the purpose of ensuring respect for the ceasefire, but also to supervise the integration of the army, assisting in the establishment and training of an ethnically balanced special unit for the protection of the institutions. The regional leaders underlined that the forces provided by the four countries were to be deployed while efforts continued for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force, as envisaged in the Arusha Agreement.

21. The Summit also decided that the transitional government should be installed on 1 November 2001, that cabinet members should be nominated in accordance with the agreed quota of posts (60 per cent for the G-7, 40 per cent for the G-10) and that the allocation of cabinet posts should be determined through negotiations among the participating signatories.

22. The Facilitator dispatched to New York two of his representatives, Mr. Bomani and Mr. Haysom, on 20 September for consultations with the Secretariat and

the Security Council. They reported to the Council on progress achieved in the implementation of the peace process and sought its support for the arrangements relating to the implementation agreed to at the Fifteenth Summit, particularly in respect of the leadership arrangements and the establishment of the special protection unit. On 26 September the Security Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2001/26) in which it reaffirmed its strong support for the facilitation of Mr. Mandela and for the installation on 1 November 2001 of the transitional government in Burundi. It also called upon the Burundian parties to reach agreement swiftly on the establishment of a special protection unit entrusted solely with the police function of providing personal security for politicians returning from exile. It further urged the international community to provide, on an urgent basis, support for the training and deployment of the special protection unit.

23. The Chairman of the Initiative, Mr. Museveni, on 1 October 2001 convened the Sixteenth Summit Meeting of the Regional Peace Initiative. In view of the disagreement between the Burundian Government and the G-7 (Hutu) group on a number of issues, including the composition of the transitional government and the transitional constitution as well as the composition and size of the special protection unit, the Summit urged both parties to solve their differences and to report to the next Summit, to be held in South Africa on 11 October.

24. In a press statement read on 10 October by the President of the Security Council, the members of the Council noted the importance of the current phase of the peace process in Burundi and called upon all parties to work together in a spirit of compromise to resolve outstanding difficulties and to advance the peace process. They reiterated their strong support for the installation of the transitional government on 1 November, called upon all the signatories of the Arusha Agreement to cooperate fully with the Facilitator and his team and the Implementation Monitoring Committee and to uphold in full the commitment they had entered into so that the necessary legal and political environment would be established to facilitate the return of the exiled political leaders. They also called upon the Burundian parties to reach agreement, as a matter of priority, on the outstanding issues, including the establishment of a special protection unit specifically aimed at providing protection for returning political leaders, and called upon the armed groups to suspend hostilities and enter into negotiations for a ceasefire.

25. The Seventeenth Summit Meeting of the Regional Peace Initiative was held as scheduled, on 11 October in Pretoria. There were a number of positive developments: on the transitional government, Mr. Mandela reported that Mr. Buyoya and the G-7 had agreed upon its legal framework, the composition of the cabinet, the structure of government and the composition of the Senate and the transitional National Assembly. With regard to the special protection unit, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa offered to provide protection for the returning exiled political leaders until an all-Burundi unit was trained and deployed. South Africa agreed to deploy a protection unit to Burundi by 1 November, to be joined later by contingents from the other three countries. The first contingent of South African troops arrived in Bujumbura on 27 October 2001.

IV. Negotiations on the cessation of hostilities/ceasefire

26. Deputy President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, who has been assisting the Facilitator in negotiations to reach a cessation of hostilities/ceasefire, updated the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Summit Meetings of the Regional Peace Initiative on his efforts. He asked the Summit to call upon the armed groups to negotiate earnestly and to meet with their leaders to impress upon them the need to conclude a peace agreement without further delay. With agreement having been reached on the transitional leadership, ending the war through negotiations between the Government of Burundi and the armed groups became a priority for the peace process.

27. At the Seventeenth Summit Meeting, the leaders of the region called upon CNDD-FDD and PALIPEHUTU-FNL, which had been invited to the meeting, to cease hostilities and to enter into negotiations leading to a ceasefire. The leader of CNDD-FDD told the Summit that the group had always supported a negotiated settlement to the conflict and hoped to be able to negotiate with the transitional government. He reiterated his call for the continuation of the Libreville process with the co-facilitation of President Omar Bongo of Gabon.

28. PALIPEHUTU-FNL agreed to negotiate with the transitional government if it accepted the proposals contained in the framework document submitted by the group two months before and to which no written response had been given. With regard to the special protection unit, both CNDD-FDD and PALIPEHUTU-FNL indicated that they would have no objection as long as the unit limited itself to providing protection to returning exiled leaders. Despite the positive indication, CNDD-FDD and PALIPEHUTU-FNL have increased their attacks on civilians. In the days following the establishment of the transitional government, more than 30 civilians were killed and scores of schoolchildren were forced to flee from their schools. Fortunately, all but a few of them have returned safely.

29. In September 2000, Mr. Mandela requested the United Nations to establish contact with CNDD-FDD and PALIPEHUTU-FNL to impress upon them the priority attached by the international community to a cessation of hostilities/ceasefire agreement and to encourage them to enter into negotiations. I entrusted the task to my Representative in Burundi, who has since expanded his contacts with the armed groups. Last May, the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region met with the armed groups for the same purpose. While efforts to end the fighting in Burundi should continue, it will be necessary for all the belligerents to observe, as a minimum, a comprehensive commitment to protect the lives of civilians and the means of their economic survival in the difficult circumstances of the war. The humanitarian coordinator in Burundi is working with the belligerents to ensure that the population has unfettered access to humanitarian assistance. The United Nations will continue to advocate a cessation of hostilities and support the ongoing efforts to find a political solution to the conflict.

30. The Arusha Agreement calls for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force to assist in its implementation. The Secretariat has initiated contingency planning for the possible deployment of a peacekeeping mission under chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations once a ceasefire agreement has been reached between the belligerents. For that purpose, a military adviser has been assigned to the United Nations Office in Burundi in Bujumbura and has been working in close coordination with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

V. Humanitarian and development assistance

31. In addition to the casualties resulting directly from the war, the prolonged conflict in Burundi continues to disrupt social and economic development. A major challenge for Burundi continues to be the stabilization of the economy and the promotion of recovery. Many of the country's social indicators have dropped below the level of 20 years ago. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita averaged $240 from 1980 to 1985; it is currently estimated at $120. The external debt exceeds $1 billion (175 per cent of GDP), while the debt service alone amounts to 124 per cent of the total value of exports of goods and services. Within such a dramatically deteriorating economic context, opportunities to earn even the minimum revenue to sustain life are increasingly rare, in both the private and public sectors.

32. The destruction and the lack of maintenance of the social infrastructure have had a devastating impact on the provision of social services, translating into a substantially deteriorated state of national health, diminished access to clean water and decreased opportunities for education. As a result, life expectancy at birth, which was 53.8 years in 1993, now stands at 42.8 years; 58 per cent of the population currently lives below the poverty line, compared with 39 per cent in 1993. Only 52 per cent of the population has access to potable water. The gross primary school enrolment rate has dropped from 70 per cent in 1992 to 37 per cent today.

33. The incidence of HIV infection is increasing at a dramatic rate: 20 per cent of the country's urban and 6 per cent of the rural population is estimated to be HIV-positive, and the number of AIDS orphans now exceeds 160,000. This overall situation is further exacerbated by the prolonged displacement, internal and external, of close to 900,000 Burundians, as well as recurrent droughts. The agricultural sector, which employs 90 per cent of the labour force and accounts for 54 per cent of GDP, has been affected in 2000 by a further decrease in production.

34. Today the humanitarian situation is fragile and likely to get worse in view of the increased hostilities. Parts of the country remain inaccessible to humanitarian assistance because of insecurity. However, harvests of the 2001 agricultural cycle (September 2000-August 2001) have been satisfactory,

and a substantial improvement in the nutritional situation has been observed since May 2001. In a joint assessment conducted in June 2001, experts from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Burundian Ministries of Agriculture and Health concluded that the situation remained critical, with levels of malnutrition higher than those recorded at the same time last year.

35. Fears of a renewed massive outbreak of malaria in June/July and September/ October have not materialized. In an unprecedented malaria epidemic that affected the whole country (and for the first time reaching higher-altitude regions), infection rates escalated in November 2000, with 722,712 patients registered in hospitals and health centres (versus 162,593 in November 1999). The number of malaria patients steadily declined, to 134,869 cases in September. In August 2001, the Burundian Ministry of Health prohibited further use of chloroquine to treat malarial infection for lack of impact.

36. The United Nations country team in Burundi is preparing a nationwide study on conditions at internally displaced person sites to determine strategies for improved assistance. The follow-up technical group within the framework for the consultation and protection of internally displaced persons is developing strategies for assisting internally displaced persons who are dispersed, particularly in the province of Bujumbura-Rural. To improve follow-up on the internally displaced person situation at the communal level, communal focal points are to be appointed who will regularly provide this information. To ensure that humanitarian assistance will also be provided to populations who dwell in zones with limited or no access, strategic distribution points are being identified in each commune. Following the fighting encountered by the army and rebel factions in mid-September 2001, an estimated 20,000 civilians have been displaced.

37. About 360,000 people live in refugee camps in the United Republic of Tanzania, of whom an estimated 20,000 have spontaneously repatriated. On 4 October, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) requested non-governmental organizations to establish transit centres for incoming refugees in the provinces of Makamba, Ruyigi and Rutana. An assessment mission was recently sent to the northern provinces to determine whether a repatriation programme could also be initiated in those areas. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Burundi has agreed to manage the inter-agency office of Ruyigi, which was formerly operated by UNHCR. At the moment, the voluntary returns of refugees from the United Republic of Tanzania should be very carefully monitored and orchestrated.

38. Throughout the seven-year crisis, the United Nations has been financing humanitarian and development activities in Burundi. Confronted with the current worsening of the humanitarian situation, the United Nations system is undertaking a number of new initiatives, including a protocol for the protection of internally displaced persons signed by the resident humanitarian coordinator and the Minister for Human Rights. The protocol would allow for joint (Government-humanitarian community) teams to follow through to ensure the safe return of internally displaced persons and the respect of human rights and humanitarian principles. With regard to post-humanitarian activities, the United Nations continues to be one of the major supporters of community development programmes to improve living conditions and to help prepare communities to absorb returning internally displaced persons and refugees.

39. Many donors have contributed to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) direct community assistance project, which covers income-generating activities, agricultural production, education, health, habitat and capacity-building. These efforts will (and need to) be continued to support an effective strategy of national reconciliation. UNDP is also supporting the Government in its preparations for a major resource mobilization initiative to combat HIV/AIDS through the organization of a sectoral consultation meeting in Geneva in late 2001 in the context of the follow-up to the 2000 Paris donors' conference for Burundi.

VI. Administrative and financial implications

40. The agreement on the transitional leadership and the establishment of a transitional government on 1 November 2001 makes it possible for the peace process to be repatriated to Burundi. When that happens, the Chairman of the Implementation Monitoring Committee will move to Bujumbura. The venue of

Committee meetings will also move from Arusha to that city when adequate security measures are put in place for the protection of Committee members and other returning exiled leaders.

41. The repatriation of the Implementation Monitoring Committee to Burundi requires the United Nations to consolidate, under the responsibility of the Chairman, the various offices and entities it has established in the field to support the Burundi peace process. Currently, the United Nations provides support to the peace process through the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region in Nairobi, the United Nations Office in Burundi in Bujumbura and the Senior Adviser to the Facilitator in Dar es Salaam. Moreover, a Joint Working Group on Burundi consisting of representatives of the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank has been established in New York to improve coordination among Secretariat offices at Headquarters and with the field. The Joint Working Group is chaired by the Department of Political Affairs.

42. It will be recalled that, in the context of the support provided by the United Nations to the Arusha peace process, I appointed in October 1998 a Senior Adviser to the Facilitator of the Burundi peace process (see S/1998/968). The Senior Adviser continued to assist the Facilitator and his team in Arusha until agreement was reached on the transitional arrangements at the Fifteenth Summit Meeting of the Regional Peace Initiative. He has since been assisting the Chairman of the Implementation Monitoring Committee in the organization and conduct of meetings.

43. In addition, when Mr. Mandela succeeded the late Julius Nyerere as Facilitator for the Burundi peace process last year, I decided to raise the profile of the United Nations within the overall efforts of the international community with regard to Burundi. At that time, I informed the President of the Security Council of my decision to appoint Mr. Dinka as my Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, at the Assistant Secretary-General level, and to designate him as my representative at meetings and deliberations of the Arusha peace process on Burundi (see S/1999/1296). As already mentioned, I subsequently appointed Mr. Dinka as Chairman of the Implementation Monitoring Committee, in consultation with the Facilitator.

44. The United Nations Office in Burundi was established in November 1993, following the coup d'état of 21 October 1993 in that country and the tragic events that ensued. Since its establishment, the Office has played an active and constructive role in assisting the parties to the peace process with regard to the building of an internal political partnership, with the Arusha peace talks and in providing information, analysis and advice to the Department of Political Affairs. As I stated in my letter to the President of the Security Council dated 2 November 1999 (S/1999/1136), once a peace agreement was reached, there would be a need for the United Nations Office in Burundi to undertake additional responsibilities in the post-conflict peace-building phase to help in the consolidation of peace and security. This would entail assisting in the implementation of the peace agreement and the establishment of new institutions, as well as providing support for the various reforms envisaged in the agreement.

45. With the repatriation of the Implementation Monitoring Committee to Burundi, the primary role of the United Nations Office in Burundi will need to be adjusted and refocused. Considering that the political role of the United Nations in Burundi now derives primarily from its responsibilities as Chairman of the Committee, the staff and resources of the Office would be restructured and strengthened to support also the Chairman, including the servicing of the meetings of the Committee and its Executive Council. Moreover, the agreement reached on the transitional leadership and the priority that is being given to the effort to reach a ceasefire agreement has added to the work of the Committee itself.

46. This will necessitate an increase in the staffing and resources of the United Nations Office in Burundi to provide it with expertise and the capability needed to support adequately the work of the Implementation Monitoring Committee and related activities in Burundi. The new political presence of the United Nations in Burundi will group together, under the Office of the Chairman of the Committee, the activities of the Committee secretariat and the political role

previously entrusted to the United Nations Office in Burundi. The net additional staff requirements would amount to 16 international posts, including the Committee Chairman (Assistant Secretary-General). A small number of military advisers and civilian police would also be attached to the Office in order to continue the contingency planning for the possible deployment of a peacekeeping mission.

47. The Implementation Monitoring Committee has been meeting every two months since January 2001 and is expected, following its meeting in October, to convene again before the end of the year in Bujumbura. The United Nations has borne the cost of convening the meetings of the Committee at the rate of about $250,000 per session. In addition, the cost related to the four legal experts to be provided by the United Nations for the independent Commission to investigate the political prisoners (para. 12 above) and their activities would amount to approximately $200,000.

48. With regard to funding for humanitarian and development activities, I continue to attach particular importance to the consolidated inter-agency appeal for 2001. At only 41 per cent, the level of response of the donor community is still not adequate to the needs, even taking into account limitations in absorption capacity due to the current conditions of insecurity.

VII. Observations

49. With the indefatigable dedication of Mr. Mandela, remarkable progress has been made in the efforts to reach a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Burundi. The decision by the regional peace initiative on the transitional leadership was a decisive step towards resolving one of the difficult outstanding issues that have impeded full implementation of the Arusha Agreement. It was encouraging that the consultations among the Burundian signatories on transitional institutions progressed quickly, making it possible for the transitional phase to begin, as scheduled, on 1 November. In this regard, I wish to express my high appreciation to the Government of South Africa for making it possible for the transitional government to be inaugurated by sending troops to Burundi to provide protection to returning exiled leaders to participate in the transitional institutions. I also commend the Governments of Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal for the commitment they have made to send troops to join the South African protection unit. For its part, the United Nations will continue to support and assist the peace process through the active participation of the Chairman of the Implementation Monitoring Committee.

50. The progress made on the transitional arrangements highlights the urgent need to cease hostilities to allow the full implementation of the Arusha Agreement. In this regard, the efforts of Deputy President Zuma of South Africa, with the active support of President Bongo of Gabon, will be of vital importance. I reiterate my call upon the armed groups to negotiate a cessation of hostilities and to join the peace process. The United Nations will continue its efforts towards concluding a speedy agreement on a cessation of hostilities in consultation with the Facilitator.

51. As the Burundian parties make further progress, it will be necessary for the international community to increase its own contribution in support of the full implementation of the Arusha Agreement. As for the role of the United Nations, I intend to present to the Security Council, as soon as the situation allows, a proposal on the United Nations presence in Burundi that would consolidate the various contributions that the United Nations system is called upon to make to the peace process.

52. The Arusha Agreement calls also upon the international community to contribute to the consolidation of peace in Burundi by assisting the country in its humanitarian, development and reconstruction efforts. This would require the United Nations system in the country to cooperate closely with the Chairman of the Implementation Monitoring Committee and to coordinate their activities with him.

53. On the development side, a number of initiatives are being put in place to support the transitional institutions as part of the good governance programme. The importance of full funding for humanitarian and development activities envisaged in the consolidated inter-agency appeal for 2001 cannot be overemphasized. In the context of the Paris donors' conference of last December and in view of the recent progress made in the peace process, I invite donors to respond generously to the appeal and to make good on the pledges they made at the Paris conference, especially now that the transitional government is in place. At the same time, I would like to reiterate my call to all concerned to facilitate the safe and

unhindered activities of the humanitarian relief community.

54. The progress achieved in the peace process in Burundi would not have been possible without the initiative and contribution of the leaders of the subregion and the ceaseless efforts and dedication of two of Africa's most renowned statesmen, the late Julius Nyerere and Mr. Mandela, as well as the generous support and encouragement of the international community. Since he assumed the daunting responsibility of Facilitator of the Burundi peace process in 1 January 1999, Mr. Mandela has challenged the Burundian parties, often against seemingly impossible odds, to put the interests of the people of Burundi ahead of those of any community or party and to strive to resolve their differences peacefully and democratically. His efforts have succeeded, and we shall always be grateful to him and commend him for it.

55. On a number of occasions, the Security Council has reiterated its strong support for the Burundi peace process and the tireless efforts of the Facilitator and those of the regional peace initiative. I have added my support as well as my appreciation and admiration for those efforts and have expressed the determination of the United Nations to do everything possible to help bring about a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Burundi. The grave humanitarian consequences of the conflict, its adverse effect on an already troubled region and the ever-present danger of an upsurge in ethnic violence make it necessary for the international community to continue to give priority attention to Burundi.